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NIT-288

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

N. KOFUJI et al

Serial No.

Filed: August 3, 2001

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR FABRICATING
SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICES

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination thereof, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

Rewrite claims 3, 5 and 6 as follows:

A'
Sub B2) 3. (Amended) The method for fabricating semiconductor devices according to claim 1, further comprising, after said third step and before said fourth step, an etching process for removing predetermined part of said first insulating material layer by etching by means of plasma of a mixed gas containing NF_3 and Ar through an opening patterned in said second insulating material layer in said third step.